

12. (New) The method of Claim 10, where said administering step is comprised of administering the composition by oral, intraperitoneal, intravenous, or topical means.

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the non-final Official Action mailed February 12, 2002. A petition for a two-month extension of time and the requisite fee are included herewith. Reexamination and reconsideration in light of the above amendments and the following remarks are courteously requested.

By the foregoing amendment, new claims 5 to 12 have been added and original claims 1 to 4 have been canceled. Thus, claims 5 to 12 are currently pending for the Examiner's consideration. The cancellation of claims 1 to 4 in no way constitutes a surrender of the right to present the claims in any subsequent proceeding.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1 to 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by, or alternatively under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over, U.S. Patent No. 6,156,982 ("Yamada"). For the following

reasons, these rejections are respectfully traversed.

Newly presented claims 5 to 12 are directed to a method of inhibiting skin cancer in a mammal by administering a composition that includes sericin. In the Office Action, the Examiner concedes that "the reference (Yamada) does not teach that the sericin can be used in the manner instantly claimed, as a skin cancer preventative agent" Consequently, the presently claimed method is clearly distinguished from the Yamada patent.

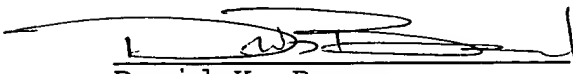
It is expected that the claims are now patentable over the prior art. While "intended use" features in composition claims are not given patentable weight unless inherent structural or compositional differences set the claims apart from the prior art, it is expected that a search has been performed involving the most pertinent art classes, which would naturally involve the field of skin cancer. Consequently, it is hoped that the present amendment leads to favorable reconsideration of the claims, and the speedy allowance of the application.

If the Examiner has any comments or suggestions that could place this application in even better form, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the below-

listed number.

Respectfully submitted,

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Appendix

Amendments to the Claims

5. (New) A method of inhibiting skin cancer in a mammal, comprising the step of administering to the mammal a composition comprised of sericin.

6. (New) The method of Claim 5, wherein the weight average molecular weight of said sericin is from 5,000 to 100,000.

7. (New) The method of Claim 5, where said administering step is comprised of administering the composition by oral, intraperitoneal, intravenous, or topical means.

8. (New) The method of Claim 6, where said administering step is comprised of administering the composition by oral, intraperitoneal, intravenous, or topical means.

9. (New) A method of inhibiting skin cancer in a mammal, comprising the step of administering to the mammal a composition comprised of a hydrolysis product of sericin.

10. (New) The method of Claim 9, wherein the weight average molecular weight of said hydrolysis product of sericin is from 5,000 to 100,000.

11. (New) The method of Claim 9, where said administering step is comprised of administering the composition by oral, intraperitoneal, intravenous, or topical means.

12. (New) The method of Claim 10, where said administering step is comprised of administering the composition by oral, intraperitoneal, intravenous, or topical means.